Listing of the Claims:

The following is a complete listing of all the claims in the application, with an indication of the status of each:

1 (Currently Amended). A distributed method for processing auction traffic using one or more servers at a plurality of nodes in a distributed processing system comprising the steps of:

using a computer implemented current local winner determination method at each of the nodes to ~~quickly~~ identify loser bids and candidate winning bids; and

using a computer implemented current global winner determination method to determine from the candidate winning bids from each of nodes a current set of winners.

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2 (Original). The method of claim 1, wherein the auction is an open-cry auction.

3 (Currently Amended). ~~The~~ A distributed method ~~of claim 2~~ for processing open-cry auction traffic using one or more servers at a plurality of nodes in a distributed processing system comprising the steps of:

using a current local winner determination method at each of the nodes to identify loser bids and candidate winning bids, wherein the current local winner determination method comprises the steps of:

(a) receiving a new bid(v,q) at a node, where v denotes the price per unit and q denotes the quantity desired;

(b) checking to see if the new bid ranks in the top $\lfloor N/q \rfloor$ bids, in terms of price/unit bid value, amongst all the bids asking for quantity q whose information is available to this process, where N is a

number of copies of a single item on sale and $\lfloor x \rfloor$ stands for the greatest integer less than or equal to x;

(c) taking the new bid along with the set of $\lfloor N/q \rfloor$ bids that have been processed and determining a new set of top $\lfloor N/q \rfloor$ bids;

(d) determining if bid(v,q) is in the top $\lfloor N/q \rfloor$ bids and, if it is not, declaring it a loser bid, but if so, declaring it a candidate bid; and

using a current global winner determination method to determine from the candidate winning bids from each of the nodes a current set of winners.

4 (Original). The method of claim 3, further comprising the steps of:

holding the candidate bid at the node for a time, τ; and

if by time τ, through an arrival of another bid, a candidate bid loses its position amongst the top $\lfloor N/q \rfloor$ highest bids, declaring the bid a loser bid;

otherwise, declaring the bid a winner candidate and making the bid accessible for further processing by the current global winner determination method.

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5 (Original). The method of claim 4, wherein the current global winner determination method comprises the steps of:

receiving new candidate winning bid from a node bid(v,q);

taking the candidate winning bid along with the set of all bids that have been processed and determines a new set of winners;

determining whether the new candidate bid(v,q) is a winner or a loser; and

notifying the bidder of bid(v,q) as to whether they are a winner or loser.

6 (Currently Amended). ~~The~~ A distributed method ~~of claim 2~~ for processing open-cry auction traffic using one or more servers at a plurality of nodes in a distributed processing system comprising the steps of:

using a current local winner determination method at each of the nodes to identify loser bids and candidate winning bids, wherein the current local winner determination method comprises the steps of:

(a) receiving a new bid(v,q) at a node, where v denotes the price per unit and q denotes the quantity desired;

(b) considering a set of bids using a set of pre-specified auction rules and selecting winners for auctioning $N+x$ copies of the item on sale; and

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(c) determinating whether the bid(v,q) is a candidate winner bid; and

using a current global winner determination method to determine from the candidate winning bids from each of the nodes a current set of winners.

7 (Original). The method of claim 6, wherein the current global winner determination method comprises the steps of:

receiving new candidate winning bid from a node bid(v,q);

taking the candidate winning bid along with the set of all bids that have been processed and determines a new set of winners;

determining whether the new candidate bid(v,q) is a winner or a loser; and

notifying the bidder of bid(v,q) as to whether they are a winner or loser.

8 (Original). The method of claim 1, wherein the auction is a descending auction.

9 (Currently Amended). ~~The~~ A distributed method ~~of claim 8~~ for processing descending auction traffic using one or more servers at a plurality of nodes in a distributed processing system comprising the steps of:

using a current local winner determination method at each of the nodes to identify loser bids and candidate winning bids, wherein the current local winner determination method comprises the steps of:

(a) receiving a bid (q) for processing, where q is the quantity desired at going price p;

(b) determinating whether the bid is in the first $\lfloor R/q \rfloor$ bids, asking for quantity q at price p, where $\lfloor x \rfloor$ stands for the greatest integer less than or equal to x and R is a currently remaining quantity on auction;

(c) if the bid is in the first $\lfloor R/q \rfloor$ bids, asking for quantity q at the going price p, then declaring the bid a candidate winner bid; and

(d) making the candidate winner bid available for further processing by the current global winner determination method; and

using a current global winner determination method to determine from the candidate winning bids from each of the nodes a current set of winners.

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10 (Original). The method of claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

giving bids processed by the method a time stamp of arrival; and

determining whether the time stamp, if it exists on the bid, is greater than or equal to the time stamp of any bid, asking for quantity q at going price p, that has been processed by the method in the past.

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11 (New). The method of claim 1, wherein bidders submit multi-item bids and the bids may be indivisible.